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Editorial: Here come the challengers

Kokomo Tribune Editorial Board

THE ISSUE

Until very recently, Hillary Clinton and Gov. Mike Pence looked politically bulletproof.

OUR VIEW

Amid damaging scandals, challengers to the left of both politicians have emerged.

What a difference a few weeks make.

It wasn't all that long ago that Hillary Clinton looked to be virtually untouchable. Jokes about her already measuring the White House drapes were bandied about as many saw her gliding seamlessly from the 2016 Democratic nomination to the Oval Office. But between the revelations surrounding the private email server she used during her tenure as secretary of state to questionable foreign Clinton Foundation donations, the cracks are beginning to show.

“Aides to former President Bill Clinton helped start a Canadian charity that effectively shielded the identities of donors who gave more than \$33 million that went to his foundation, despite a pledge of transparency when Hillary Rodham Clinton became secretary of state,” reported Mike McIntire and Jo Becker of The New York Times on Wednesday.

Sensing the inherent weaknesses in this establishment, centrist Democrat, junior Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders officially announced his candidacy Thursday. (Although caucusing with the Democrats and seeking the Democratic presidential nomination, Sanders is an independent and self-described socialist.) As Dylan Matthews of Vox reported Thursday, a quick [OpenSecrets.org](https://www.opensecrets.org) search will reveal the true differences between the two candidates.

“The differences could hardly be more striking,” wrote Matthews. “Out of Clinton's top 20 organizational donors, only two (EMILY's List and the University of California) aren't corporate. There are seven mega-banks, five corporate law/lobbying firms, and three big entertainment companies. ... By contrast, 19 of Sanders' top 20 donors are unions.”

Here in Indiana, a similar story is playing out as Republican Gov. Mike Pence finds himself still reeling from the fallout over the disastrous signing of our state's Religious Freedom Restoration Act. As we've written before, Pence was previously seen as a likely presidential, if not gubernatorial, candidate in 2016. With his poll numbers in free fall, both those

propositions look much shakier than before. And challengers to his left have smelled blood in the water.

“Former Indiana House Speaker John Gregg, a Democrat who narrowly lost the 2012 governor’s race to Republican Mike Pence, said Thursday he will run for governor again because he thinks Pence’s focus on social issues has given the state ‘a bad name,’” reported The Associated Press in a story we ran Friday. “Gregg’s announcement Thursday came after another Democrat, embattled state schools Superintendent Glenda Ritz, said she hadn’t ruled out running for governor.”

Clearly, both local and national politicians on the left have learned Napoleon Bonaparte’s famous maxim: “When your enemy is executing a false movement, never interrupt him.”